

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BERLIN 00853 161651 Z

44

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 EURE-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 PA-03 PRS-01

USIA-12 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 L-03 RSR-01 H-02

/063 W

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R 161534 Z MAY 73 ZFF4 PRA

FM USMISSION BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1820

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 0853

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, PFOR, CZ, UR, US

SUBJECT: DETENTION OF NEW YORK TIMES CORRESPONDENT

( A ) BERLIN 835 ( NOTAL); ( B ) BERLIN 797 ( NOTAL)

1. HEDRICK SMITH, MOSCOW BUREAU CHIEF OF NEW YORK TIMES AND WIFE WERE DETAINED 1200-1930 MAY 15 AT GDR/ CZECHOSLOVAK BORDER STATION OF DECIN, SUBJECTED TO SEARCH, AND DENIED ADMISSION. SOME OF WRITTEN MATERIAL THEY CARRIED WAS CONFISCATED. SMITH'S REPEATED REQUESTS TO GET IN TOUCH WITH AMERICAN CONSUL IN PRAGUE WERE REFUSED.

2. SMITH REQUEST FOR PROTOCOL AND RECEIPT FOR CONFISCATED MATERIALS WERE REFUSED. AFTER CONSIDERABLE DEBATE AND DELAYING RETURN TRAIN TO BERLIN MORE THAN HALF HOUR, CZECHS QUOTED RAPIDLY AND UNINTELLIGIBLY PARAGRAPH FROM CZECH  
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PAGE 02 BERLIN 00853 161651 Z

LAW AND SAID AMTERIALS WERE INCOMPATIBLE WITH TOURIST TRIP. CZECHS ATTEMPTED TO HAVE SMITH ADMIT HE WAS CARRYING ANTI-SOVIET AND ANTI- CZECH MATERIAL. FOLLOWING ARE ITEMS CONFISCATED:

A) SIX NOTEBOOKS WITH NOTES FROM ROMANIA, POLAND AND GDR. ROMANIAN AND POLISH MATERIAL RESULTED IN LARGE PART FROM OFFICIALLY APPROVED INTERVIEWS.

B) SEVERAL SHEETS OF YELLOW LEGAL PAPER SUMMARIZING PARA 2 A ABOVE.

C) WIFE' S NOTEBOOK WITH SHOPPING LIST AND TRAVEL CONNECTIONS.

D) ABOUT 12 RADIO FREE EUROPE REPORTS ON EASTERN EUROPE.

E) LIST OF NAMES AND ADDRESSES.

F) PERSONAL MARKED COPIES OF " DOCTOR ZHIVAGO" AND " MASTER AND MARGARITA"( UNCENSORED VERSIONS).

G. MOST PERSONAL LETTERS WERE RETURNED AFTER CONSIDERABLE DELAY.

3. SMITH SAID THAT CZECH REFUSED REQUEST HE MADE FOR RETURN OF MATERIALS WHEN CZECHS CANCELLED HIS VISA. HE SAID HE CALLED TO CZECH ATTENTION THAT HE WAS NOT JUST TRAVELLING TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA, THAT MTERIALS WERE RELATED TO GENERAL TRIP AND CONTAINED MUCH POSITIVE MATERIAL. ALTHOUGH SMITH SAID ON HIS BERLIN VISA APPLICATION/ ENTRY CARD ONLY THAT HE WORKING FOR QUADRANGLE PRESS ( NEW YORK TIMES SUBSIDIARY), CZECHS DID NOT ACCUSE HIM OF ATTEMPTING TO SNEAK INTO COUNTRY. SMITH NOTED TO CZECHS HE WAS NOT GOING TO SEEK OFFICIAL INTERVIEWS.

4. SMITH SAYS CZECHS BECAME SUSPICIOUS WHEN THEY DISCOVERED MRS. SMITH HAD SOME WASHINGTON POST CLIPPINGS AMONG CLOTHING IN SUITCASE. SMITHS WERE MADE TO EMPTY POCKETS AND POCKETBOOKS, BUT NO PERSONAL SEARCH WAS CONDUCTED. EAST GERMAN ON RETURN READILY ISSUED TRANSIT VISAS TO BERLIN.  
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PAGE 03 BERLIN 00853 161651 Z

5. SMITHS ARE ON TOUR OF EASTERN EUROPE. THEY WERE TRAVELLING TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA ON TOURIST VISAS OBTAINED IN BERLIN. CZECHS IN MOSCOW HAD REFUSED TO ISSUE CORRESPONDENT VISA, ALTHOUGH OTHER EAST EUROPEANS, WITH EXCEPTION GDR, HAD DONE SO. EAST GERMANS POINTED OUT TO SMITH THAT THEY HAD JUST ISSUED VISA TO DAVID BINDER OF BONN BUREAU FO NEW YORK TIMES; THEY NOTED,

HOWEVER, THAT SMITH COULD ALWAYS CROSS BETWEEN WEST AND EAST  
BERLIN.

6. IN ADDITION TO ANY APPROPRIATE PROTEST OVER DETENTION,  
SMITH HOPES EMBASSY PRAGUE COULD MAKE SOME EFFORT TO RECOVER  
HIS MATERIALS. SMITHS DEPART BERLIN BY AIR FOR VIENNA MAY 17  
AND FROM THERE WILL CONTINUE TO HUNGARY, YUGOSLAVIA AND  
BULGARIA. SMITH HAS INFORMED HIS HOME OFFICE INCIDENT.

7. FOR ADDRESSEES OTHER THAN PRAGUE. BERLIN 835 WAS  
NOTIFICATION TO PRAGUE OF EXPECTED SMITH VISIT.

8. FOR ADDRESSEES OTHER THAN MOSCOW BERLIN 797 WAS  
REPLY TO MOSCOW NOTIFICATION OF SMITH VISIT TO BERLIN KLEIN

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NMAFVVZCZ

\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* CONFIDENTIAL

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**TAGS:** CASC, PFOR, CZ, UR, US  
**To:** BELGRADE  
BONN  
BUCHAREST  
BUDAPEST  
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